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THE ASSOCIATED CHARITIES
OF BOSTON.

ESSAYS BY OCTAVIA HILL.

DISTRICT VISITING.

A FEW WORDS TO VOLUNTEER VISITORS AMONG THE POOR.

A MORE EXCELLENT WAY OF CHARITY.

A WORD ON GOOD CITIZENSHIP.

EFFECTUAL CHARITY.

Reprinted from "Our Common Land."

I.

DISTRICT VISITING.

MAY 4, 1876.

I HAVE assumed throughout this paper that most district visitors feel a certain dissatisfaction both with district visiting and with systems of relief as they exist, even where such systems are best organized. Some may think that there is too much relief given, some that there is too little, others that what is given is of the wrong kind. I believe, also, some visitors feel that their spiritual influence is interfered with in different ways by the unsatisfactory character of the temporal relief. To some of them it seems incongruous to carry tracts in one hand and coal-tickets in another; to others, that carrying either, still more carrying both, as a matter of course, shuts them off from true intercourse with the best kind of working men and women; others, again, feel that carrying tracts without coal-tickets when the grate is empty seems a little like want of sympathy; and others that carrying coal-tickets without tracts is treating the poor as if they were only concerned with the outside things of life.

However earnestly our clergy have desired to solve this problem of how to deal wisely with the temporal condition of their flocks, it remains a problem still. However tenderly our visitors have mourned over it, as it affects hundreds of individuals, it remains mournful still. What prospect is there of its being vigorously studied with a view to solution, or even to radical improvement, by those who have power to effect improvement! Busy, overworked clergymen, with services and sermons, and churches and schools, and thousands of souls to see to, have inherited systems of relief in their parishes which they hardly have time to reform, and the gigantic pressure of daily duty perpetuates many unwise plans, though many, I am well aware, are being abolished. How far the best still falls below what they would like to see let the clergy themselves say. I believe most of them, if asked, would reply, "I have tried honestly to make my system of relief as satisfactory as I could, but it is far from my ideal." And this is so from another cause. You can never make a *system* of relief good without perfect administration, far-sighted watchfulness in each individual case; and this is specially true in an age in which bad systems of relief have trained the people to improvidence. Given your entirely enlightened clergyman, he cannot in a large London parish do much more than see to his people when the crisis of distress has come. He cannot watch over them before it comes, yet it is then that distress is preventable. On whom does the continuous watchfulness devolve at best? Visitors — young, in-

experienced, untaught — undertake districts. They find themselves part of a system, and follow in its lines. They meet individual cases of want, improvidence, disease; and though they know little themselves how to deal with such, they hesitate to make calls upon the time of a too busy clergyman, kind as he is in helping, gladly as he would reply to a practical question about the individual. They cannot talk out with him radical means of dealing with the roots of such evils. What can they do? They give or withhold the soup-ticket or the shilling. Has the clergyman usually time, has the visitor often knowledge, to do much more than deal with the individual question of relief or no relief, at the moment in the special case?

And yet the problem has become appalling, gigantic: viewed in its entirety, it might make us almost tremble.

Statesmen, philanthropists, political economists, try their hands at it, or rather their heads. Do they succeed better than the clergy and the visitors? Do they not often succeed worse? For the clergy and the visitors at least bear witness to the poor of sympathy with them, and deal with the wants round them practically; while the theorists, let their theories be ever so excellent, somehow stand so far off that they bring little practically into operation. Who does not know of good laws passed which are nearly inoperative because not enforced by brave persons face to face with the evils which should be removed by them? Who does not know of sound principles of political economy clearly enunciated to those unconcerned by them, which never reach the ears of those whose lives they deeply affect, still less are brought before them by those whom they would trust?

Now these two classes — the studious, more leisurely, generalizing thinkers, and the loving, individualizing doers — need to be brought into communication; and that is what, in this paper, I wish most emphatically to enforce. Each has knowledge the other requires. Separated, they are powerless: combined, they may do much. For I have drawn miserable pictures of the weakness of both; but see, on the other hand, what each has of strength. The clergy have all that is pitiful, all that is generous in the hearts of their richer parishioners on their side, — the power of calling out workers from among them, the power of directing a large part of their alms, the distribution of money, the leadership of the men. Besides these they have the enormous accumulated knowledge of the poor, gathered in long years of intimate observation of them in their homes, — a mass of information over which they may not have much time to brood, and from which they may not be in the habit of generalizing, yet what might not the theorists learn from it?

And the visitors? I have called them inexperienced; and I might have added that their work is less valuable in many ways, because it is intermittent. But pause to think what these visitors are and might be. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of gentle, earnest, duty-doing souls, well born, well nurtured, well provided for, possibly well educated, turning aside out of the bright paths which they could pursue continuously, to bring a little joy, a little help, to those who are out of the way. A voluntary gift this, if a very solemn duty. I have heard persons who

give their whole time to the poor, speak a little disparagingly of these fleeting visits; and young girls themselves, fevered with desire to do more, talk rather enviously of those who can give their time wholly to such work. But have they ever thought how much is lost by such entire dedication? or, rather, how much is gained by her who is not only a visitor of the poor, but a member of a family with other duties? It is the families, the homes of the poor, that need to be influenced. Is not she most sympathetic, most powerful, who nursed her own mother through her long illness, and knew how to go quietly about the darkened room; who entered so heartily into the sister's love and marriage; who obeyed so perfectly the father's command when it was hardest? Better still if she be wife and mother herself, and can enter into the responsibilities of a head of a household, — understands her joys and cares, knows what heroic patience it needs to keep gentle when the nerves are unhinged and the children noisy. Depend upon it, if we thought of the poor primarily as husbands, wives, sons, and daughters, members of households, as we are ourselves, instead of contemplating them as a different class, we should recognize better how the house-training and high ideal of home duty was our best preparation for work among them. Nay, to come down to much smaller matters than these family duties, to the gladness of party, ball, and flower-show, I believe these, too, in innocent and happy amount, when they brighten the eyes, and bring the ready smile to the face, and make the step free and joyous, prepare us to bring a gleam of sunlight into many a monotonous life among the poor. What, in comparison with these gains, is the regularity of work of the weary worker, whose life tends to make her deal with people *en masse*, who gains little fresh spring from other thoughts and scenes? For what is it that we look forward to as our people gradually improve? Not surely to dealing with them as a class at all, any more than we should tell ourselves off to labor for the middle class, or aristocratic class, or shop-keeping class. Our ideal must be to promote the happy natural intercourse of neighbors — mutual knowledge, mutual help, of a kind, certainly, but not this professed devotion of a life. And it will be better from the beginning to mould our system so that it shall bear witness of what it ought to become. If we establish a system of professed workers, amateur or paid, we shall quickly begin to hug our system, and perhaps to want to perpetuate it even to the extent of making work for it. Well, here we have then our wonderful company of visitors, full of real care for the people; with time and intelligence to apply the wisest principles, — did they but know them, — with fullest thought, to individual cases; capable of inspiring confidence; of winning allegiance; of getting those whom they visit to understand what is best for their future, and to make up their minds to do it. Is not this precisely what is needed? — the individual thought which can apply the wise principles, the love which can influence the wills which should be brought into harmony with those principles? Then turn to consider how these principles are now being thought out, with what painstaking devotion, what science, what accuracy some of our greatest men are studying them. What a mass of information they have accumulated!

How day by day they are learning to explain better the meaning of it all! Think of the doctors, the legislators, the poor-law reformers, the advocates of co-operation, the members of the Charity Organization Society, how they examine, study, and expound! Once duty to the poor was supposed to consist in giving large alms; once, self-sacrifice and devotion were thought sufficient qualifications for a worker among the poor. Now it is seen that to these must be added the farthest sight, the wisest thought, the most self-restraining resolution, to make a useful worker.

These two classes, gentle doers and wise thinkers, stand far apart; yet, if they could be brought into close communication, both would gain much — the people for whom they are both laboring would gain much more. In what follows, I have tried to show how such a communication might be made a practical reality. The scheme described is not based wholly on theory, but has substantially been in operation in a district of Marylebone for some years, and has been lately adopted by two other districts.

To effect a union, to establish communication with so numerous a body as the district visitors of London, would be in itself difficult. The difficulty is increased by the fact that they are not only a very numerous but very changeful body. Not only does death, marriage, or migration take them wholly away, but they are often interrupted by temporary absence from home, household duties, illness; and this far more than would be the case with paid workers, their district work being only a secondary, though a very real, duty. These incessant changes could never, without enormous labor and much likelihood of confusion, be registered at one centre. And this necessitates that the visitors must be dealt with by certain selected persons, who may be local leaders or centres. Large numbers of them are already gathered in district groups, round various churches and chapels. My first very natural thought was to ask the ministers of those churches and chapels to accept new duties towards their visitors, to bring before them whatever it might seem to the theorists ought to come under their notice, and to transmit to the theorists any individual problems quite too hard for solution in the locality, and to be ready to furnish other information to visitors on questions affecting the temporal condition of their people. But it was obviously impossible to ask hard-worked London clergymen and ministers to undertake additional work, especially such a work as this. For its whole value should depend on the constant, living, detailed interchange of information. And, besides, though the district visitors attached to churches and chapels are by far the most numerous bodies to be enrolled, there are other groups which it is important to secure, and there are also individual visitors to be enlisted who might be ready to help with tangible work, and not prepared to take spiritual work. And this is another reason for not asking the clergy to take up the task. On the whole, then, it appears to me best to suggest leaving the question of all spiritual and moral work exactly where it is — where it almost must be — gathering round the clergy and ministers, everything affecting it being referred to them, and, of course, all funds and charities now

in their hands being as hitherto managed and distributed wholly under their direction; but at the same time to ask them to consider whether they could single out some one from each ecclesiastical district, or from any given group of visitors, who should be a secretary to the others, a means of communication between them and the people, dealing as officials or theorists with questions affecting large bodies of the poor.

I will describe what I think such a secretary should be and do.

She need, at first, have no special knowledge of laws affecting the poor, institutions established for them, or the principles of action which those who have thought most on the subject unite in thinking best. Ladies furnished with such knowledge would not be found in many districts; and though such information would doubtless be of immense value, it would not be essential to secure it at first, as a great deal would be rapidly acquired by any one holding the post of which I speak. She ought to have a good deal of time for writing, and seeing her fellow-workers. She need not have time for visiting the poor. In fact, I should advise selecting some one who had experience in visiting them, but was content to resign that work, as I think her full available power should be devoted to her secretarial duties. She should be able, however, to attend regularly at least one meeting weekly of the Charity Organization Committee of her district. If she has a house of her own, or so much control over one as would enable her to see the visitors often there, it would be a great advantage: in fact, some way of seeing them frequently and individually appears to me essential. She should be one who, for the greater part of the year, is resident in town; for though of course a temporary successor could be appointed, or her post left vacant, absences — especially if frequent — would be a drawback to her usefulness. She ought to have tact, gentleness, and firmness. She must be a careful conscientious woman of business, with clear head or very methodical ways; for, next to ready sympathy, method will be of all things most necessary to her. Such a secretary should, in that capacity, busy herself only with matters relating to the temporal condition of the poor. She would have relations to her own group of visitors, to the locality in which she lived, and to the metropolis generally. Those to her own fellow-workers would be different, probably, in different cases; but, I suppose, she would help and advise new visitors; tell them of the local charities; consult with them about special cases; register their temporary absence, getting the clergy to fill in such gaps, if possible; show them how to keep written records of families under their charge in given form, so as to be of use to succeeding visitors, whether temporary or permanent; and communicate to visitors, new and old, all facts within her knowledge which might be of value to them. With regard to the local organization, I will not stay to describe in detail the ways in which she might be valuable to the School Board officer, to the relieving officer, to the inspector of nuisances, who might learn to look to her for more radical means of help than are at their command, — both material and moral — and for information as to details such as rarely reaches officials, and yet might enable them to bring beneficent laws more powerfully to bear on special cases. The secretary should

not only avail herself of the investigating machinery of the Charity Organization Society, but she should, as I said, attend the committee meetings. There she will learn an immense deal about wise principles of relief, new and important facts of law affecting the people, and the working of various institutions; in short, she ought to get there nearly all the instruction she requires. She would also be invaluable to the committee. She would be well acquainted with the principles on which relief is given by those whom she represents, could tell whether they would be likely to make a grant in a certain case, and, approximately, how large such grant would be. She would know, too, how to enlist that individual gentle help which is so often needed in cases coming before the Charity Organization Society after the preliminary investigation is made, and which the paid agent has neither time nor capacity to give. In fact, for applicants from every street and court and lane in which a visitor was at work, she would know to whom to turn for the personal attention which the Charity Organization Committee feel they so urgently need. Nor would her services end there. Not only would she obtain the aid of the visitors she represented at such times of crisis in the history of a poor family as those in which they usually apply to the Charity Organization Society, not only would she be able to supply a detailed report of the past life of the applicant on points which might bear on the committee's decision, but afterwards, when the decision was made and relief granted or withheld, through succeeding years she would get the people watched over with that continuous care without which right decisions at any particular crisis of life lose half their efficacy — indeed, she might often avert such a crisis altogether. For instance, she might get the visitors to induce the man to join a provident dispensary or club, — which would be more satisfactory, though not perhaps more necessary, than refusing him aid when he has not done so. Sometimes, when I think of those Charity Organization Committees so much misunderstood by many, because they have so resolutely determined to give no fresh unsatisfactory relief, — some of them tenderly pitiful of the poor, some of them a little far off from them, but all trying to help them in thoughtfully considered ways, — and of the great current of careless, inconsiderate relief going on unchecked and uncontrolled by them, I feel as if a union between you and them would do more than almost anything else to help the poor. There they are all ready for you in every district of London, asking you to co-operate, asking you to study with them what is best; and you leave them, in too many cases, to be mere repressers of the grossest forms of mendicity, and by no means organizers of charity. If the plan I suggest were adopted by only a few visiting societies, I delight to think what might be gained by furnishing the committees with a few gentle workers, representing many more, and associated with the charities of the neighborhood.

But I pass on to consider the relations of these secretaries to the metropolis. They ought to be supplied with information about the laws affecting the poor, Sanitary Laws, Poor Laws, Education Acts, &c.: they ought to get notice of important meetings about medical charities,

of new suggestions and arrangements as to the best methods of collecting and storing the earnings of the poor. And how is this to be done? Much of it might even now be done through the Charity Organization Society. All of it, I hope, will be done through the Society in the future; but the committees are too busy, too occupied with their daily labor, to deal with this new matter with the fulness of detail which, at first, it will require, and perhaps they do not everywhere nor always command the full sympathy and confidence of their district. Added to which, I have noticed that people, curiously enough, are more willing to invite information from private persons than from official bodies. Something must be done to meet the wants of a time of transition; and I trust I am not over bold in offering, while the plan is new, to do what I can to fill the gap. But, in the future, we ought to endeavor to secure that the visitors should be so organized that they themselves can compare notes, and each communicate to each how practical difficulties have been met in particular localities, — so organized that facts bearing on their work should reach them swiftly and certainly, and that their experience should be accessible for legislators and reformers.

I have set before you nothing great, nothing grand, no new society, no fresh light, even, on the problems respecting wiser systems of relief, or their applications to individuals, which you are desiring so much to solve, each in your own parish or court. I do believe those problems to be capable of solution. I do believe that our almsgiving has been cruel in its kindness. It is for the sake of the people themselves that I would see it decreased, yes, even put down altogether. I believe they would be richer, as well as happier, for it. For the sake of the energy of the poor — the loss of which is so fatal to them; for the sake of that intercourse with them — happy, friendly, human intercourse, which dependence renders impossible, — seek to your utmost for better ways of helping them. We can give you no general rules which will obviate necessity of thought. Singly must your difficulties be met, singly conquered. But see that you throw upon them all available light from the experience of others, the thoughts of the thoughtful. No new society, no great scheme, have I to urge, only if here or there any one or two of the groups of visitors care to select one among them to be their secretary, and send me her name and address, I will tell her what I can which I think may be helpful to her or them. We might meet, too, we secretaries, now and again, to talk over important questions and strengthen one another; and though I could not possibly find time to deal with difficulties in detail, I might show, or get shown, what plans have been found useful in places which I know. I might help, too, a little about finding employment. I hear of a good many situations of an exceptional kind, and difficult to fill up suitably; and notices of such vacancies I might send on to secretaries, who could find among their visitors some one who would care to spend thought and time in fitting into an exceptional place the person best adapted for it. The large demands for labor are, I believe, best dealt with by advertisement or registry; but there is not any more valuable way of helping individuals than by fitting them in where they are wanted, in ways that are not

possible except to those who have personal knowledge of candidates. Mere routine notices might thus meet great human needs.

I have spoken throughout this paper of outward means and appliances: I have referred very little to improvement of the lives and spirits of men. This is not because I do not care for those lives and spirits. They are reached, we must remember, in many different ways. A great deal of life is necessarily spent in getting its surroundings into order; and in London here, this machinery of ours, all the tangible things round us, need a great deal done to them. It tests us better than any words can do. It is very difficult — impossible, I believe — to make the things of this world fair and orderly, to arrange them justly, to govern them rightly, without living very nobly. The right use of money, the laws affecting houses and lands, involve principles which test the sincerity of a man or a nation, — they test it, I say, as words cannot test it. I think our poor see this very clearly, and that, strange as it may seem, the messages about God's nature, and about his relation to them, come in a subtle way through our acts. More, perhaps, than through our words. This is emphatically so just now. They have heard a great many words, and have been puzzled because our actions have often seemed to them at variance with those words. I know how hopelessly we must fail in any attempt to live up to the unspeakable majesty of God's tenderness, and the boundless wisdom of his righteousness; but even our failure, after sincere trial, brings a message of what he is to his children. Our actions are speaking to them. For this reason, I have never felt the execution of the most minute duty with regard to tangible things beneath my notice; and I do not feel that, in urging any of you to consider the right settlement of questions of temporal relief, I am asking you to devote yourselves to a task which is otherwise than holy. On the contrary, I have felt that it can be only rightly dealt with by those who are content to carry it on in silent allegiance to One who will judge with farther sight than feeble men, who will know what deeper mercy there may be in the act which looks to men harsh at the moment. Indeed, I dare not trust the difficult things there may be to do, in refusal of immediate help, to any mere reasonable political economist. The generals who can direct the sad retracing of our foolish steps, should be those who care for the people because their Father cares, and so desire to make them what he would have them to be. And the only ones who will have fortitude to bear the misunderstanding this may cause will be those who feel tenderest pity for the people.

Not a small thing, even in itself, is the dealing with the tangible and soulless things of earth. We may be very proud — justly proud — of the well-ordered spot of earth, the well-spent income, the self-restrained providence, whether they are our own, or whether we have helped another so to regulate the talents entrusted to him; but the glad pride breaks away, and a deep thankfulness overpowers us, if ever, by word or deed, we seem to have helped any one to catch even a little glimpse of that mighty Love which enwraps his spirit, uniting it in solemn harmony with all that *is* contained, as well as all that *cannot* be contained, in this wonderful, visible world.

II.

A FEW WORDS TO VOLUNTEER VISITORS AMONG THE POOR.

JUNE 23, 1876.

You have asked me to speak to you to-day about work in this parish, and you know I have not the pleasure of knowing it or you. If anything I say is inapplicable, you must forgive my ignorance. But if I am able to give you any hints which are of use it will not be strange; for one comes across the same kind of difficulties in many various districts of London just now. After the paper is read, if there are any special questions affecting your own district, which any of you care to ask me about, I shall be delighted to answer them to the best of my power from this place, or we will have a little general conversation about them later.

Now I am going to say a great deal about hurtful gifts. But do not misunderstand me, and jump to a conclusion that, because I speak of these, I have lost sight of the great and good gifts we are each of us bound to make. The needs of the poor we must consider our special charge, and each of us give what we can that *is* real help, — not only time and heart and spirit and thought, but money too. Only we must see that it is really helpful, which needs thought and experience; and if we haven't experience, we must seek it. There are gifts of money to be made; there are hard workers, recovering from illness, to be sent to convalescent homes; there are orphans to be supported and well educated; there are pensions to feeble old people who have worked hard, to be given to meet their own savings or compensate for lost savings; there are children to be placed in industrial schools; girls to be fitted out for service; travelling expenses to be paid for people going to better fields of work. But the decision about even these safer forms of gift requires experience. Give, by all means, — abundantly, liberally, regularly, individually, with all enthusiasm, by all manner of means, — but, oh, give wisely too!

Now to secure this wise relief, I am convinced you will require good investigation, co-operation on the part of your donors, thought and time given by your wisest men. All these are essential; but I am not going to dwell on them just now. The part of your work I am naturally most interested in is your district visiting. I wonder whether you have among you instances of the solitary, inexperienced district visitor, and can feel for her difficulties? Do you know what I mean? A lady — well born, highly cultivated, well nurtured — becomes convinced that she has duties to the poor. Perhaps some great personal pain drives her to seek refuge from it in Christian service of the poor. Perhaps some family loss darkens her whole horizon, and opens her eyes to other forms of sorrow. Perhaps some stirring sermon startles her in the midst of

triumphant pleasure, making her feel that she ought to give some slight offering of time to the poor. Perhaps weariness of all superficial glitter of amusement makes her seek for deeper interests in life. Be it what it may, — desire to do good, or the urgent request of a friend, or desire to escape pain, — she determines to volunteer as a district visitor. She is welcomed by the clergy, and requested to take such and such a district, — I really think she has often little more preparation or instruction than that. She does not start with the desire of knowing the poor, but of helping them, — help being, in her mind, synonymous in such cases with temporal help. She does not think of them primarily as *people*, but as *poor* people. But though her ideas naturally, therefore, turn to questions of *relief*, as if these were her main concerns, she has never studied what has been found to be the effect of different ways of almsgiving, — she knows little about the earnings of the poor, little of their habits and expenses, little about poor-law relief, little about the thousand and one societies for granting various kinds of help, little about the individual donors at work in the neighborhood, little about distant fields of labor and demands for workers in them. Now just pause and think of the effect of her actions when she begins — as begin she must by the very fact of her view of her duty — to deal practically with questions of relief, — questions which, to say the least, are so difficult to deal with wisely that our most earnest, experienced, and thoughtful men pause in awe before them, advance slowly to practical conclusions, and speak humbly about them after years of study. Ladies would pause before they went in and offered to help a house-surgeon at a hospital by undertaking a few patients for him; yet are they not doing something like it when they don't seek advice in district visiting? Gradually, after weeks, months, perhaps years, of worse than wasted labor, those who persevere begin to realize the disastrous effect of their action. Hundreds who do not steadily persevere, never even catch a glimpse of it, and go on blindly scattering gifts to the destruction of the recipients. For just pause and think what these gifts do to them. You or I go into a wretched room. We see children, dirty and without shoes. A forlorn woman tells us a story of extreme poverty, — how her husband can find no work. We think it *can* do no harm to give the children boots to go to school. We give them, and hear no more. Perhaps we go to Scotland the following week, and flatter ourselves, if we remember the children, that that gift of boots at least was useful. Yet just think what harm that may have done. Perhaps the woman was a drunkard, and pawned the boots at once, and drank the money. Or perhaps the man was a drunkard, neglecting his home; and the needs of it, which should have been the means of recalling him to his duties, he finds partially met by you and me and others. Or perhaps the clergy have seen that the poor woman cannot support the children and her husband (who is much too ill to find work), and have felt that, if she and they are not to die of starvation, they must go into the workhouse; for it is the only means of getting enough for them. Charity, not being organized in the district, cannot undertake to do all that is wanted for them, and so had better do nothing. For gifts so given may raise false

hopes which you and I, now pleasantly enjoying ourselves, never think of. Because we went in and gave those boots, because others like us gave coal-tickets and soup-tickets last winter, What may not turn up? the poor woman asks herself. That gambling, desperate spirit enters into her heart, the stake being freedom and home. She plays high: she wins or loses. We charitable people, first of all, never investigated the case to learn what it really was, what the character of the people was, whether the home was worth keeping together, whether with or without club-money it would cost more than we were ready or able to give. We raised hopes which it is a chance whether we fulfil. We met the want before us without thought. We forgot to consider the influence of that action on the life. Such gifts are uncertain, insufficient, based on no knowledge. Let us imagine that, in another case, we give to a man whose income is small: what is the effect on his character of these irregular doles? Do they not lead him to trust to them, to spend up to the last penny what he earns, and hope for help when work slackens or altogether fails? Does he try, cost what it may, to provide for sickness, for times when trade is dull and employment scarce? Yet though we have, by our gifts, encouraged him in not making the effort to do this, are we quite sure to be at hand when the need comes? Are we not most likely to be away? Trade is slack when London is empty and district visitors away. Every man's riches depend on his providence: they do so tenfold more markedly the nearer poverty he is, — yet we have undermined his providence by uncertain action. Do not our doles encourage him to keep his big daughter at home, earning a few pence in the street, where she has what she calls "freedom," instead of training her for decent service? I believe our irregular alms to the occupant of the miserable room, to the shoeless flower-seller, are tending to keep a whole class on the very brink of pauperism, who might be taught self-control and foresight if we would let them learn it. I believe, too, that our blanket charities, soup-kitchens, free dormitories, old endowed charities distributing inadequate doles, have a great tendency to keep down the rate of wages of the very lowest class, — partly because they come in like a rate in aid of wages (not so regular as that of the old poor-law, yet still appreciable); partly because they tempt large numbers, who might raise themselves, to hang on to low callings, and make competition fiercer in them and the chance of absolute want greater. The street-sellers and low-class desultory workers usually remain what they are by choice. A little self-control would raise them into the ranks of those who are really wanted, and who have made their way from the brink of pauperism to a securer place, and one where they are under better influences. Above all is this true of the children. A little self-control would enable the daughters of most of these people to rise into the class of domestic servants; and their sons, instead of remaining street-sellers, would soon learn a trade or go to sea, if they cared to do regular work. We are largely helping, by our foolish gifts, to keep them herded together in crowded, dirty, badly-built rooms, among scenes of pauperism, crime, and vice. And we each of us think it is only the two shillings and sixpence, only the shilling

for this or that perfectly justifiable object we have given. I have sometimes wanted to move some widow and her children to the North, where the children would learn a trade and support themselves well, where the woman would find much more work at washing and charring, and where the family would have a cottage, healthy and spacious, instead of the one close room. The widow has been a little fearful of making so important a step. If the guardians, if the clergy, if, above all, the visitors, have let the need of work teach its own natural lesson, that family has removed, and has been happy and independent. I have now several such well established in the North. But if the various donors have broken in with their miserable pittances of fixed or desultory relief, the family — in poverty and uncertainty of income — have dragged on here in London. In nearly every case requiring help, there is some such step of *self*-help which ought to be taken by the family itself, or some member of it. Some girl ought to go to service, some boy to get a place, some member of the family to begin learning a trade, some cheaper lodging to be found. Depend on it, you cannot wisely help a family, you cannot tell whether help at all is needed, till the circumstances and character of each member has been well investigated. Lay this to heart as a fact: I am certain of it. Let it be with any of you who desire to do good a strict rule to yourselves to have the case of every family you want to help thoroughly scrutinized. If you can make up your mind not to give anything pending the receipt of a report, so much the better. But if you can't (I think you soon will), at any rate never give a sixpence without sending for a report on the case. It will guide your future action in that and other instances. It is not much I ask of you. The Charity Organization Society in every district in London will do the work for you free of charge. I am afraid I cannot yet promise you that it will always advise you as to efficient treatment. Some of the committees could; and all that could would. But it is even more difficult to advise as to suitable treatment than to investigate a case; and it is not easy to find members for thirty-eight committees yet who know very much of the subject. But every Charity Organization Committee will know *far* more than inexperienced visitors; and I should strongly advise all visitors to consult the Committee about families in their district apparently needing relief.

I hope you will notice that I have dwelt on the need of restraining yourselves from almsgiving on the sole ground that such restraint is the only true mercy to the poor themselves. I have no desire to protect the purses of the rich, no hard feeling to the poor. I am thinking continually and only of what is really kindest to them — kindest in the long run certainly, but still kindest. I think small doles unkind to them, though they bring a momentary smile to their faces. First of all, I think they make them really poorer. Then I think they degrade them and make them less independent. Thirdly, I think they destroy the possibility of really good relations between you and them. Surely, when you go among them, you have better things to do for them than to give them half-crowns. You want to know them, — to enter into their lives, their thoughts; to let them enter into some of your bright-

ness; to make their lives a little fuller, a little gladder. You, who know so much more than they, might help them so much at important crises of their lives. You might gladden their homes by bringing them flowers, or, better still, by teaching them to grow plants; you might meet them face to face as friends; you might teach them; you might collect their savings; you might sing for and with them; you might take them into the parks, or out for quiet days in the country, in small companies, or to your own or your friends' grounds, or to exhibitions or picture galleries; you might teach and refine and make them cleaner by merely going among them. What they would do for you I will not dwell on, for, if the work is begun in the right spirit, you will not be thinking of that; but I do believe the poor *have* lessons to teach us of patience, vigor, and content, which are of great value to us. We shall learn them instinctively if we are among them as we ought to be as friends. It is this side of your relation to them, that of being their friends, which has given all the value to your work as district visitors: it has been because you have been friends, — in as far as you have been friends, — that the relation between you has been happy and good. The gift has often darkened this view of you, and prevented the best among the poor from wishing to know you: when it has absolutely been the expression of friendship, its evil has been reduced to a great extent. But the gift you have to make to the poor, depend upon it, is the greatest of all gifts you can make, — that of yourselves, following in your great Master's steps, whose life is the foundation of all charity. The form of it may change with the ages: the great law remains, "Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away." But see that thou give him bread, not a stone — bread, the nourishing thing, that which wise thought teaches you will be to him helpful, not what will ruin him body and soul; else, while obeying the letter of the command, you will be false to its deep, everlasting meaning. My friends, I have lived face to face with the poor for now some years; and I have not learned to think gifts of necessaries, such as a man usually provides for his own family, helpful to them. I have abstained from such, and expect those who love the poor, and know them individually, will do so more and more in the time to come. I have sometimes been asked by rich acquaintances, when I have said this, whether I do not remember the words, "Never turn your face from any poor man." Oh, my friends! what strange perversion of words this seems to me. I may deserve reproach; I may have forgotten many a poor man, and done as careless a thing as any one; but I cannot help thinking that to give *one's self*, rather than one's *money*, to the poor is not exactly turning one's face from him. If I, caring for him and striving for him, do in my inmost heart believe that my money, spent in providing what he might by effort provide for himself, is harmful to him, surely he and I may be friends all the same. Surely I am bound to give him only what I believe to be best. He may not always understand it at the moment, but he will feel it in God's own good time.

III.

A MORE EXCELLENT WAY OF CHARITY.

July, 1876.

You have asked me to speak to you to-night, though I am a stranger to your parish, and know nothing of its special needs or special advantages. Why, then, am I here? I suppose I may safely assume that it is mainly because I represent those who have deep care for the poor, and *also* strong conviction that organization and mature thought are necessary to any action which shall be really beneficial to them. I fancy your parish, like many another, — like most others that have not passed through the stage and answered the problem, — is just now questioning itself as to whether investigation, organization, deliberate and experienced decision, which it feels to be essential if wise relief is to be secured, are, or are not, compatible with gentle and kindly relief; whether charity can be fully of the heart, if it is also of the head. If so, how are you to get the full strength of head and heart? If this is impossible, what in the world you are to do, for you cannot give up either. You ask practically, I fancy, when you invite me here, what I think on these points.

I answer, then, emphatically and decidedly, that my experience confirms me entirely in the belief that charity loses nothing of its lovingness by being entirely wise. Now it cannot be wise without full knowledge of the circumstances of those to be dealt with — hence the necessity of investigation; it cannot come to satisfactory conclusions on those facts unless it employs the help of experienced men — hence the need of a committee for decision; it will not be gracious and gentle, nor fully enter into individual needs, unless it secures the assistance of a good body of visitors. I do not wish to draw your attention to any special form of organization; but I believe you will find, the more you think of it, that some form is needed, and that whatever it be, it will have to secure those three as essentials, — good investigation, decision by a wise committee, and the help of a staff of visitors.

I shall say nothing further on the first head, investigation, except that I consider it is done best by a good paid officer. A great deal of the preliminary work is quickly and well done by an experienced person, which it would be difficult for a volunteer to do; neither is it a sort of work which it is worth while for a volunteer to undertake. I refer to verifying statements as to residence, earnings, employment, visiting references, and employers. The finishing touches of investigation, the little personal facts, the desires and hopes, and to a certain extent the capacities of the applicant, no doubt a volunteer visitor would learn more thoroughly; but that can always be done separately from the preliminary and more formal inquiry.

And now to turn to the consideration of the visitors, — those who must be the living links binding your committee with the poor, the

interpreters of their decision, the bearers of their alms, the perpetual guardians to prevent renewed falling into want. I have spoken in so many other places of the extreme value of such a body working in concert with a wise committee, and of the mistakes they are likely to make where undirected, that I am unwilling to dwell on either point in much detail here. I will only briefly reiterate that I think no committee can do its work with real individual care unless it contains those who will watch over each family with continuous interest, interpret its decisions intelligently and kindly, and learn all personal detail which may assist the committee in judging rightly. Unhappily, visitors have very seldom any special training for their work, nor is the need of it pointed out to them. I earnestly wish we could get this recognized; not that any should be deterred from working from want of training, but that in every district some plans for advising and helping the inexperienced visitors, and binding all visitors more together, should be adopted. I have, in a paper read elsewhere, given a sketch of a practical scheme for securing this end. But even without the help there spoken of, visitors might try to look a little farther into the result of their action. They think of the immediate effect, and very little of the future one. Now in all things we must beware of hasty action. It is not well, in the desire to alleviate an immediate want, to produce worse want in the future. I do not know the poor of your district: there may be many more of them, and they may be poorer, than I suppose; but in really populous poor parishes I have found, and surely you should find here, that an immense deal more might be done by the people for themselves than has been done hitherto. Whatever may be the difficulties of finding work for them, aim at that first. Try to get them to bring up their children to callings requiring skill, and which will raise them to the higher ranks of labor; help them to save; encourage them to join clubs; lend them books; teach them to cultivate and care for flowers. These and other like influences will indirectly help them far more, even as to outward comforts, than any gifts of necessaries. But do not, when a family wants help, hesitate to give largely, if adequate help, will secure permanent good. Remember, if you establish people in life so that they can be self-supporting, it is well worth while to do it, cost what it may.

I know little of your parish. But if it be, as I fancy, one in which the rich are many and the poor few, compared to other places, I should like to add a word or two to such residents as are in good health and working here, urging them to consider the needs of more desolate districts, and pause to think whether or not they could transfer some of their time to them. I know it is a difficult question, and one to be judged, in each case, on its merits. I know well what may be urged on the ground of individual friendships formed with dwellers in your neighborhood, on the score of want of strength and time, and the claims of your own parish. Weigh these by all means; but think of the other side too, if by chance you can realize it. Friendship with poor old women in your district! Respect its claims. But are there no times when it may be worth while to make a change in work, even

if it cause one to see less of friends? Have you ever seen the ward of an East-End workhouse, where, from year's end to year's end, the old women live without any younger life round them — no sons or daughters whose strength may make their feebleness more bearable, no little grandchildren to be cared for, and make the old which is passing forget itself in the young which is coming into vigor? Is your bright young presence not asked for by the gray, monotonous, slowly-ebbing life of those wards? If your strength does not allow you to visit in remote districts, I grant that an unanswerable argument; for strength is meant to be temperately used and not thrown away. Time! Well, it takes time to go backwards and forwards. But isn't one hour where the need is great and the workers very few worth more than many hours in a more favored district?

Have you ever realized what those acres and acres of crowded, heated, badly-built houses, over which you pass so quickly by train when you go in and out of London, mean? what kind of homes they make? what sort of human beings live and die there? Have you asked yourselves whether your presence, your companionship, is needed there? whether the little children want your teaching? whether your gentleness, your refinement, your gayety, your beauty, are wanted there? Neighborhood! Oh, yes, it has strong claims, — some of the best possible; but then we must take care that we let our neighbors come round us naturally, rich *and* poor. I only know this neighborhood as I see it from the station, and it is possible it is otherwise inside; for I know quarters where the poor lodge often escape the eye of a casual observer. But I do know districts which *are* very like what yours *looks*, where the villas cover all the ground, and there is no place for the poor man's cottage, — where the idea of building for him would be mentioned with awed abhorrence by the comfortable residents, and they would talk about the unpleasantness of the poor living so near, chances of infection, &c., &c.; where the few persons required to serve the needs of the residents live, in a somewhat pampered and very respectful dependence, in small districts decently withdrawn from view, (visited and over-visited by ladies who haven't far to go); where the poor say there isn't a house to be had, and the rich say they get everything from a distance.

While you are determined to have the *rich* neighborhoods, you must have the poor ones elsewhere. When you have gathered the poor round you, built for them, taught them, purified their houses and habits by your near presence, — by all means talk about the claims of neighborhood. But till then you must, I believe, take a wider outlook, and think of the neighborhoods you have left, where moreover those who indirectly serve you earn their bread. You who are merchants' wives and daughters, — nay, even those of you who buy the merchants' goods, — have the dock-laborers no claims upon you? If the question, Who is my neighbor? is asked by you, how do you think God answers it from heaven when he looks down and sees the vast multitudes of undisciplined poor by whose labor you live, and the few heroic workers whose lives are being spent for those poor almost forsaken by you?

And if some of you went there to give what little of leisure, what little of strength, you have to spare, would your own neighborhood suffer? I fancy not. For it seems as if usually where there are few poor and many rich living near together, the former become dependent in fat unenergetic comfort on the latter; and if this be such a neighborhood, a few finding a call for their sympathy and help elsewhere might do good to all. It might be a real blessing to the place where you live to transfer to other and needier districts some of the superfluous wealth and unneeded care which from its very abundance may be spoiling and pampering your native poor. What a good thing it might be if each of your congregation here would undertake to help with money and with workers some poor district where wise principles were being strenuously and faithfully worked out. Only remember, though you may send your money, and send it to those who use it wisely, the gift is a very poor one compared with that of yourselves. It is *you* who are wanted there, your love, your knowledge, your sympathy, your resolution, — above all, your knowledge; for if you saw, you could not leave things as they are. For instance, on a summer evening sultry as this, there are thousands of families who have no place to sit in but one close room, in which the whole family has eaten, slept, washed, cooked. It is stifling. They go to the doorstep. Their neighbors are at their steps. It gets hotter. The children swarm in the narrow court. The dust flies everywhere. The heat, the thirst, is insufferable; the noise deafening; the crowd bewildering. They go to the public-house. Do you wonder? It may be there are a few spaces unbuilt over close by; but who will open the gates for them, plant a few flowers, put a few seats? The garden of Lincoln's Inn Fields is certainly kept very lovely; but how few eyes are allowed to see it. Red Lion Square is a howling ugliness. The Board-School play-grounds are closed on Saturday.* The little graveyard in Drury Lane † — half the graveyards in London — are close locked and barred, and left in ugliness too. The Quakers are actually deciding to sell, for building purposes, their ancient burial-ground near Bunhill Fields. ‡ Can they not afford to let the place allotted to their dead be consecrated to the poor, and become a place of rest to the weary living before their pilgrimage is over? Money, money, money, to spend where we see its effect in parks or villas or cosey suburban houses, and not a glimpse of what we might do with it in the districts where the poor live and die!

Of course, this is only one side of the truth; and no one knows the converse better than I. I know how people are coming forward, year by year, to do and to feel more and more of their duty to the poor. The interest deepens and spreads, and that rapidly. Haven't I myself such a body of fellow-workers as makes me hardly know how to be thankful enough? And, doubtless, many of you here are doing exactly what I urge, or better things than I have thought of. But forgive me, if the sight of all that is needed sometimes makes me a little impatient,

* Eighteen of these are now to be opened.
† Now open to the public, and planted as a garden.
‡ Since sold for building.

and urge the point with some implied reproach towards those who delay to come and do what it looks as if they might. I dare say they may many of them have better reasons than I know for holding aloof: all have not the same duties. But sure I am that the need is urgent, and that to many such work would add new and deeper interests to life. I only say, "Look for yourselves what the need is, consider what your duty may be; and when seen, do it resolutely, quietly, hopefully."

And now, leaving the subject of visitors, let us consider, in conclusion, the third point essential to wise dealing with the poor, — the decisions of your committee after the facts are gathered for it by investigating agent and volunteer visitor. Now, to secure right decision, one must have a distinct object in view. What is to be the ultimate object of your decisions respecting relief? Let us at once distinctly clear the way by assuming that it must be the good of the people themselves. We have nothing to do with saving the money of the rich. It is possible — nay, probable — that in our first attempts to put charity on a right footing, we may have to spend more than we did before, and make larger demands on the purses of the wealthy. A few substantial gifts, wisely bestowed, may easily make up a larger sum than a multitude of petty, careless doles. A weekly pension, a grant of a few pounds to help a family to migrate, is more than the money equivalent of many a random shilling. But if, on reflection, we decide to withhold gifts of any kind whatsoever, it is only to be done for the sake of the people themselves. If doles or bread-tickets or coal-tickets are proved to help the people, we are bound to give them to the extent of our power. If they are proved to injure them, we are bound not to give them, however pleasant it may be, however easy, however it may seem to pave the way for other influences. Do we want to make the poor depend on relief which is ready at a moment's notice, instead of having the fortitude to save a little to meet a sudden emergency? If so, we shall be always treating cases as urgent, and relieving pending investigation, and assuming that discretionary power of granting instant help must be vested somewhere besides in the relieving-officer. I know parishes where benevolent people plead that starvation or great need may arise if they have a weekly committee and no officer empowered to deal with urgent cases. Suppose we ourselves had lost the pride of independence which does still exist in the middle and upper classes, though the tendency to look for extraneous help is, I sometimes fear, eating gradually upwards, — but suppose we had no hesitation, on the score of pride, in asking our richer neighbor for a meal, or new clothes or boots, or additional blankets, or a ton of coal, would it be better for us to use just the amount of providence necessary for us to go to him a week beforehand and say, "Please, we shall want our dinner next Sunday," or would it be better for us to be led to expect that, if we called on Saturday to tell him the fact, and he was out at a garden-party, when he came home he would say, "Dear me, perhaps they have no dinner, and Sunday too. I dare not wait to see why they are in want, whether there is any member of the family who might be helped to a place where he can earn more. I'd better send some roast meat. I don't like to be enjoying

myself at garden-parties with my wife and daughter, and not consider my poorer neighbors"? Do you think that, be our earnings much or little, that kind of help would be likely to be helpful? The smaller the earnings, the more need of providence; and there is no man so poor but he might, by effort, at least have a few shillings in hand for emergency, if he really felt it important. Literally, that is all that is wanted to do away with this clamor about urgency, — that every man should, at some time of his life, put aside five or ten shillings which should be ready for need, and apply for help directly he saw need to draw upon that, instead of when he hadn't a crust in the house. I don't know whether you are troubled with this great bugbear of "urgency" here. It frightens many districts, but always disappears when approached. Depend upon it, starvation cases are more likely to arise where we have trained our poor to look for instantaneous help, than where they rely on their own forethought, at least to the extent I have mentioned; for *if* they trust to sudden aid, and any accident prevents their receiving it, then they have no money, and are in need indeed. Depend on it, the poor-law, which the poor do not turn to readily, which has, moreover, a strong permanent machinery in every parish in England, is the only right source of relief for urgent cases. No respectable family but has friends, neighbors, or savings to fall back on just while you look well into their cases. Those who are not respectable want (and, in my estimation, should have) help. But they cannot be helped easily with grants in urgent haste. They need thought and influence and much power. If, then, we decide that urgent cases can be left to the poor-law, your committees will have those only left to deal with whose circumstances they can thoroughly know and deliberately decide upon. And these, I believe they will find, class themselves into cases in which temporary help will raise the applicants into permanently self-supporting positions, and chronic cases. The first, no doubt, they will try to help liberally, carefully, and kindly. The second they will probably help only if they can do so adequately, — which I should fancy here you might easily do, if you all heartily and thoughtfully co-operated, and knew each what the other was doing, so that no work was done twice over. Such organization of alms-giving would be, I should think, the limit of your aim at present.

Perhaps you will also add to these relieved persons a very large number of sick, whom I should be glad to see, after, say a year's notice, forced into some independent form of sick-club.

For I do not myself believe that we from above can help the people so thoroughly and well in any other way as by helping them to help themselves. This I think they are meant to do — this I believe they can do by association and by forethought When they do provide necessaries for their own families, I think it leaves our relation to them far better, and enables us to help them more fully in better ways. After all, what are the gifts of these outside things compared to the great gifts of friendship, of teaching, of companionship, of advice, of spiritual help? I know some people think the half-crown, or packet of tea, the best introduction to these. I cannot say I have seen it so. I do not

remember a single example, in any age or country, in which a class in receipt of small occasional doles was in a position of honorable, healthy friendship with the givers of such, or fit to receive from them any intelligent teaching. Of course, the receipt of alms produces courtesies and respectful welcomes, and perhaps attendances at church or chapel, from those who care more for the gifts than for the quiet dignity of independence which is found in many humble people, — more for the good tea than for any sermon or service. But how do the better ones feel it? Haven't your gifts absolutely tended to alienate them from churches and chapels? Do they not scorn them, and desire to be seen to benefit nothing by them? The application for help is nearly always made by the wife; and the respectable husband would no more make it than you or I would, — in nine cases out of ten. Only notice what happens whenever the rule is that the man must come up to ask for help. They hardly ever come, but simply earn the needed amount. And among the women, too, the better ones hold aloof from anything that looks like bribery to come to a place of worship. I would ask any clergyman whether he does not think that the mixing of temporal gifts with spiritual teaching has not a direct tendency to lower the value of the teaching in the eyes of the recipient. Of old, when apostles preached, they treated the Gospel as good news which the people would care to receive for itself. They honored it in treating it as if it were a blessing. Of course, it is difficult to distinguish between the actions which come from the radiant outpouring of every species of good gift in mere wealth of joyful human love springing from vivid sense of Divine love (which we see in earnest preachers of all ages), and the gift which is meant to be — and felt to be — a bribe. In many cases, probably, the gifts comprise a mixture of love and a purpose to attract, which it would be impossible to separate. But religious teaching, I have no manner of doubt whatever, has suffered, of late years, incomparably more than it has gained by this confusion. Let the gift, then, stand or fall by its own intrinsic value. If it be helpful in itself, cultivating such right qualities as will make the recipient richer in such outside things as itself, let it be made. If not, withhold it. And for God's sake, let his truth stand on its own merits. If it be a real need of his children, trust him in his own good time to make this plain to them. Preach it by word, by deed, by patient abiding; but do not use bribes (or even what look like bribes) to make men take it in. Depend on it, it cannot be taken so. It has been accepted in this and other ages by men ready to meet poverty, toil, scorn, death, rather than be false to it. It has been accepted with acclaim by multitudes who felt in it the answer to their difficulties, the great good news for their lives. The lowest natures, when they have received it, have done so through the noble feelings which are latent in the worst of us. It is only through appeal to these, — their fortitude, their reverence, — that it can come home to them. I cannot believe that God's truth has ever entered one human heart wrapped up in a bribe. Let it speak quietly for itself. It is very strong. Shall we doubt it? Our special form of it, or application of it, may not commend itself to our neighbors. Do not let this disappoint

us. Let us, with single-minded zeal, try to get those neighbors to be and to do what they see to be right; and then will be revealed to them, gradually, whatever form of truth they can comprehend and apply. They will help to form God's church, which is of many members. And if —

> "Our little systems have their day,
> They have their day and cease to be,"

we must remember that the words go on, —

> "They are but broken lights of Thee,
> And thou, O Lord, art more than they."

IV.

A WORD ON GOOD CITIZENSHIP.

I HAVE often, on previous occasions, felt bound to urge, not only the evils of indiscriminate almsgiving, but the duty of withholding all such gifts as the rich have been accustomed to give to the poor. At the same time, I have realized so fully how tremendous the responsibility of abstaining from such gifts is considered by the donors, that I have not thought they could act on my advice without themselves seeing that it would be merciful as well as wise to withhold such gifts. I have, therefore, usually said, "Look for yourself; but look with the sound of my words ringing in your ears." And those words have been distinctly to proclaim that I myself have no belief whatever in the poor being one atom richer or better for the alms that reach them; that they are very distinctly worse; that I give literally no such alms myself, and should have no fear for the poor whatever if any number of people resolved to abstain from such alms. But on the other hand, I have long felt, and feel increasingly, that it is most important to dwell on the converse of the truth.

The old forms in which charity expressed itself are past or passing away. With these forms are we to let charity itself pass? Are there no eternal laws binding us to charitable spirit and deed? Are we, who have become convinced that doles of soup, and loans of blankets, and scrubbing-brushes sold at less than cost-price, have failed to enrich any class (have helped to eat out their energy and self-reliance), thereon to tighten our purse-strings, devise new amusements for ourselves, expend more in luxurious houses and expensive dinners, cultivate our own intellects, indulge elegant tastes, and float down the stream of Time in happy satisfaction that the poor cannot be bettered by our gifts, — in fact, must learn self-help, we meantime going to flower-shows or picture-galleries, or studying systems of political economy? Are the old words, "Bear ye one another's burdens," to pass away with the day of

coal-tickets? Have the words, "Ye are members one of another," ceased to be true because our tract and dole distribution has broken down? Are there no voices still speaking in our hearts the old commandment, "Love one another"? Is that love to be limited, henceforward, to the pleasant acquaintances who call upon us, and like the same poets, and can talk about Rome and the last clever book? Or is it, as of old, to go forth and gather in the feeble, the out-of-the-way, the poor? Is humanity, is nationality, is citizenship too large for our modern love or charity to embrace? and shall it, in the future, be limited to our family, our successful equals, or our superiors? Are we going to look out and up, but never down? The love of our Master Christ, the love of St. Francis, the love of Howard, the love of John Brown, the burning love of all who have desired to serve others, has been a mighty, all-embracing one, and specially tender, specially pitiful. All modern forms of almsgiving may pass and change; but this love must endure while the world lasts. And if it endure, it must find expression. Charity such as this *does* find expression. It finds expression, — when healthiest and most vigorous, — not in weak words, but in strong acts. If we would not be mere butterflies, and perish with our empty, fleeting, self-contained lives; if we would not be fiends of intellectual self-satisfaction, living a cold and desolate life; if we would not leave the hungry, the forlorn, the feeble, to perish from before us, or to rise and rend us, — we must secure such love as that which lighted and intensified the lives of heroes and of missionaries, and struggle to see what scope there is for acts which shall embody that love.

The mistake the old-fashioned donors make is not in their benevolence: that cannot be too strong. But they forget to watch whether the influence of their deeds is beneficent. I should not at all wonder if, even thirty years ago, doles were more beneficent than now. If the poor had at that time not learned to trust to them, if they came straight from the loving hands of those who cared to step aside from beaten tracks to know and serve the poor, they must have had very different results from any they have now, when people *have* learned to depend on them, — when they are almost the fashion, and often the relief for the consciences of those who don't feel quite easy if they give *no* time, *no* heart, *no* trouble, nor *any* money to the poor. I have no manner of doubt, that, just now, gifts of necessaries are injurious. What form, then, shall our charity take in the immediate future?

Take that question home to yourselves, each of you who has not answered it already. Ask it of yourselves, not as if you were asked to take the position of hero or martyr or professed philanthropist, but as if I had said to you, "What do you, as a man or woman, feel bound to do beyond the circle of your family for those who are fellow-men, fellow-citizens, many of them sunk into deep ruts of desolation, poverty, and sin?" Find some answer, live up to it: so shall your own life, your own city, your own age, be better.

I will tell you what kind of answer I think may come to you. First, as to money, — which is, perhaps, the most difficult thing to give without doing harm. Don't sit down under the conviction that, therefore, you

are to buy or spend it all for yourself. If you like to earn rather less, to pause in middle life, and give full thought to spending what you have, — or, better still, to give time, which might have made money, — I shall certainly not complain of you. But do not think there is no scope for beneficent gifts of money because soup-kitchens and free dormitories are not beneficent. There is abundant scope for large gifts, — large enough to please the proudest of you. Are there no great gifts of open spaces to be made for the rich and poor to share alike in the time to come? spaces which shall be to the child no more corrupting than the mountain to the Highlander, or the long sea-horizon to the fisherman's lad? They will come to him as an inheritance he possesses as a Londoner or an English child, — most likely being taken (like light and air) straight from God, and not in any way tending to remind him of men's gifts, still less to pauperize him. But if a memory of you as a donor comes to him as youth ripens into manhood, long after you are in your grave, the thought is more likely to incite him to make some great, abidingly useful gift to his town, than in any way to paralyze his energies or weaken his self-respect. Are there no places to plant with trees, no buildings to erect, no libraries to found, no scholarships to endow? Are there, moreover, none of those many works to achieve, which a nation, a municipality, a vestry, first needs to see done, to learn the use of by using, though finally such a community may prize them more by making an effort to establish similar ones? For instance, no one would dwell more urgently than I on the need of making healthy houses for the poor remunerative; and now the problem of doing so has been in a great measure solved. But do we not owe this to the efforts of a body of men in earlier time who were content to lose money in experiments and example? Pioneers must risk, if not give, largely, that we may travel smoothly over the road which they made with such difficulty. Are we in turn never to be pioneers? Are there no improved public-houses, no improved theatres, no better machinery for collecting savings, which we may establish and give our money to? The same kind of far-sighted policy might be adopted with all smaller gifts, making them either radically beneficial in themselves, as when they train an orphan for service-work in life, or give rest to an invalid whose savings are exhausted. Or they may be gifts of things which no one is bound to provide for himself, but which give joy, — as if you helped to put colored decoration outside our schools or houses in dingy streets, or invited a company of poor people whom you know to tea in your garden during the fair June weather, or even sent some shells from your home by the sea to small children in one of our few London playgrounds.

But to leave the question of money, and come to the greater gift of *time*. Here, especially, I would beg you to consider whether you have each of you done your utmost. A poor district in London is inhabited by a number of persons, ill-educated, dirty, quarrelsome, drunken, improvident, unrefined, possibly dishonest, possibly vicious. I will assume that we, too, have each of us a good many faults, — perhaps we are selfish, perhaps we are indolent. I am sure all the virtue is not among the rich; but certain advantages they surely have which the poor have

not, — education, power of thinking out the result of certain courses of action, more extended knowledge of facts or means of acquiring it, habits of self-control, habits of cleanliness, habits of temperance, rather more providence usually, much more refinement, nearly always a higher standard (perhaps a high standard) of honesty. Have we not a most distinct place among the poor, if this be so? Is not our very presence a help to them? I have known courts nearly purified from very gross forms of evil merely by the constant presence of those who abhorred them. I know, you probably all know, that dirt disappears gradually in places that cleanly people go in and out of frequently. Mere intercourse between rich and poor, if we can secure it without corrupting gifts, would civilize the poor more than anything. See, then, that you do not put your lives so far from those great companies of the poor which stretch for acres in the south and east of London, that you fail to hear each other speak. See that you do not count your work among them by tangible result, but believe that healthy human intercourse with them will be helpful to you and them. Seek to visit and help in parishes in which this is recognized as an end in itself.

Again, we have got our population into a state of semi-pauperism, from which individuals and societies cannot raise them merely by abstaining from gifts by guardians or withdrawing out-relief. We have accustomed them to trust to external help, and only by most patient individual care shall we raise them. Neither can we persuade donors, unaccustomed to study the future results of their acts, to abstain from distinctly unwise charity unless we are among them, unless we are ready, too, to consider with them about each human soul (which is to them and to us inexpressibly precious) what is at the moment the wise thing to do. Have most gentlemen any idea how much this work needs doing in the poor districts of London? The Charity Organization Society came forward, now some years ago, to try to get the donors of London to meet and consider this question in detail in every district in London. It undertook to look carefully into all cases brought to its offices, and to report the results of its inquiries. It did *not* undertake to make additional gifts except where they might secure enduring benefit; but it said to the donors, "Associate yourselves: relieve after due thought, after investigation, and in conjunction one with another." That Society has made great way. It has established offices in every district, and has provided an investigating machinery of inexpressible value, of which every Londoner may avail himself. But, I ask, where are the donors? Where are the representatives of the various relieving agencies? the clergy? the district visitors? There are, of course, a certain number who have co-operated heartily; but, as a rule, I am forced to reply very mournfully, after all these years, they are for the most part going on with their ill-considered relief very much the same, not using the machinery, and reproaching the Charity Organization Society that *it* is not relieving largely, and that it is not composed of themselves! Now, till these relieving agencies come in and take their share, and give their gentler tone to the somewhat dry machinery, are these offices to be places where mere routine business is done by an

agent who cannot have much individual care for the applicants? Or is there to be any one to watch over each applicant with real charity, questioning him gently, thinking for him sympathetically, seeking for him such help as will be really helpful? In some offices in the poor districts we have found honorary secretaries to do this, and splendid work it has been. Wherever such help has been forthcoming, the poor have been well served; and the old-fashioned donors have been, in some measure, won to wiser courses of action. But many more such honorary secretaries are needed, and that imperatively and immediately. Are there no men of leisure, with intellect and heart, who will come forward? I have known no such urgent need as this in the many years I have spent face to face with the poor since I came to London, — the need of advice, of sympathy, of thoughtful decision for poor man after poor man, as he comes up to our offices at a crisis in his life.

One more instance of the way help can be given, and I have done; for I will not dwell now on the good that might be done by the purchase and management of the houses of the poor, by teaching, by entertainments for them, by oratorios, by excursions, by the gift of beautiful things. I will only point out now that, as guardians or vestrymen, the most influential sphere of work presents itself. If you try to get into parliament, many men (of equal education, high principles, and refinement) probably contest the place with you. If you succeed, they fail. If you try to make a name among the fashionable or wealthy circles, you may or may not succeed; but if you fail, no one misses you much. But if, instead of trying to get high up, you were to try to get down low, what a position of usefulness you would have! You would learn much from vigorous colleagues, — much, I fancy, which would make you ashamed. But what might not they gain, what might not the locality gain, if the administration of its affairs were carried on under the influence of men of education! As guardians, how you might see to the poor, leading them back to independence, in most thoughtful ways! watching over them individually, that no wrong was done! As vestrymen, how you might be on the side of far-sighted expenditure or the suppression of corruption! When I see people all struggling to get up higher, they seem to me like people in a siege, who should all rush to defend the breach for the glory and renown of it, and trample one another to death, and leave little doors unwatched all round the town. And I can't help wondering, sometimes, why more of them don't pray Marion Erle's prayer, when she leaves the wedding-dress unfinished to go and nurse the fever-stricken patient, "Let others miss me: never miss me, God."

I don't the least mean that the works I have suggested are the only ones, or the best, or even that always that *kind* of work may be best. The form that charity takes, in this age or in that, must be decided by the requirements of the time; and these I describe may be as transient as others. Only never let us excuse ourselves from seeking the best form, in the indolent belief that no good form is possible, and things are better left alone; nor, on the other hand, weakly plead that what we do is *benevolent*. We must ascertain that it is really *beneficent* too

V.

EFFECTUAL CHARITY.

June 18, 1877.

Tender pity for the poor has been a growing characteristic of this age. A better sign of it still is the increased sense of duty to them, — not only as *poor* men, but as *men*. There needs, however, it appears to me, something still before our charity shall be effectual for good. The feeling is there, the conscience is there; but there is wanting the wise thought and the resolute, because educated, will.

Our charity, if by the word we mean our loving-kindness, has been good in itself; but if we mean by the word, almsgiving, can we flatter ourselves that it has been productive of a satisfactory state of things? We have taught our poor to live in uncertainty as to their resources, which is producing among them a reckless want of forethought which is quite appalling. The most ordinary occurrences of their lives, — the regular winter frost which stops the work of some men year by year; the changes in the labor market, caused by the London season; the expenses attending illness; the gradual approach of old age, — are not dwelt on now usually among the poor as reasons for trying to provide a fund to meet them. Thus there are hundreds of our people living on the extremest brink of pauperism or starvation, learning more and more to be dependent on the chance coal-ticket or half-crown or blanket; and if it does not happen to be given at the moment when it is wanted, how forlorn is the position of the improvident man! But look also on the even more important question of their spirit, and of their relation to those above them in class. Can there be energy, independence, vigor, healthy activity among them? Can there be between them and the donors any of that happy, manly interchange of thought by which the possessors of education, refinement, leisure, might help, or be helped by, the active, self-reliant working-man, with his large capacity for fresh vigorous joy, and his store of power accumulated during a long period of endurance and patient effort? If different classes, like different people, have separate characters which are meant to act and react one on the other, are we not, by allowing the help to be one of a dole of money, destroying the possibility of the better help that might have been?

And is our money doing any good? Did you ever see the district, the family, the individual, that was richer for this repeated almsgiving? Has it ever been powerful, even for outside good, to be recipients? Is the bed better covered in the long run for the lent blankets, or the children better fed for the free distribution of soup? Or is it consistent with our ideal that there should be this body of people dependent for the most ordinary necessities of life on the gifts of another class? Rely upon it, if we foster this state of things, it will continue to increase.

Here we are, however, in the midst of this almsgiving, — aimless, thoughtless, ineffectual to achieve any object its donors had in view. It

is a gigantic system, or rather no system, which has grown up around us. What is our duty with regard to it? Specially, what is the duty of those of us who are, in any sense of the word, trustees of charitable funds?

There is a society which you all know well enough by name, — the Charity Organization Society, — which has set itself to help distributers of alms in two important ways. First, it has offered to examine, free of all charge, carefully, for any one who wants to learn about them, the circumstances and character of applicants for relief. Donors cannot decide what help it is wise to give until they know all about an applicant: the Society can learn such facts in a far more complete way than donors possibly can. Clearly then, to my mind, donors or distributers of gifts ought to accept this proffered help.

But the Society offers a second advantage: it will give an opinion on the case of an applicant. When the facts respecting his condition and character are ascertained, the problem is simply this: How can he be so helped that the help may soon be needed no longer? how placed speedily out of the reach of want, in an honorable, useful place, where he can help himself? Or if his need be necessarily chronic, how can he be provided for adequately and regularly, — so regularly that he shall be tempted neither to begging nor extravagance? It is very difficult to set a man up again in the world; and the main hope of doing it is to pause deliberately over his case, to bring to bear upon it all the collected information, all the practised experience and intelligent thought of men and women accustomed to think out such problems, and to watch the results of many attempts to solve them. The ordinary district visitor has no qualifications for forming an opinion on the best way of meeting the difficulties of the case, nor usually has the busy clergyman much more. The visitor has very rarely even a glimmering notion that there is such a way of dealing with the poverty she pities, — she hardly dreams that it is possible to attack it at its roots, — and so she gives the ticket or the shilling. The clergyman usually feels that this is an unsatisfactory way of treating the matter. But he knows probably no more than the visitor, in what part of the country there may be an opening for work for the man whose trade is slack in London; nor what training would enable the invalid girl who can only use her hands, and lies bedridden and helpless, to contribute something to the common income; nor what institution would receive, and how the guardians might pay for, the cripple who is made an excusé for begging for the whole family, and how he might learn a trade, and in the future honorably support himself. It is only a body accustomed to deal with many such cases, to devote attention to practical questions mainly, that acquires the knowledge of what measures can be taken under different circumstances, and knows the latest news as to the labor market, and the opportunities open to the needy.

I am far from saying that the Charity Organization Society has, as yet, in each of the thirty-eight divisions of London, a committee capable of giving a valuable opinion on a case; nor even that in every district the committee has realized that to give such an opinion is its real

end and aim. But I do say that this is the intention of the Society, and that on the committee, if anywhere, you will in each neighborhood find the men and women most alive to the importance of fulfilling this duty; for more and more of the district committees are finding members who set before themselves the necessity of learning to execute it.

I know little of your own Charity Organization Committee, but I would ask you to remember that it is not a separate society coming from afar and settling down among you. It is what you workers among the poor make it: it is you who ought to form it. And that which I said above you separately were not able to do, collectively you, and none but you, can do, — decide what help it is wise to give to every poor man or woman who comes before you at a crisis in life. A representative from every local charity, a few men conversant with the work of every great metropolitan charity, two or three active guardians, the clergy and ministers of all denominations, or some leading member of their staff or congregations, — these should form your district committee. After careful investigation by a skilled paid officer, the case of an applicant for charity, when it comes before such a committee as that, has a fair chance of really effectual treatment. Either some one present will know of work that needs to be done; or, if the applicant's wants can only be met by distinct gift, then, all the givers or their representatives being present, the gift can, after due deliberation, be made without chance of overlapping, with certainty that it is sufficient and its object well thought out.

District visitors will find it valuable to study, with the district committee, many questions respecting relief. The work of visitors is one in which I have long taken the deepest interest: their gentle influence in their informal visits is just what is wanted to bridge over the great chasm which lies open between classes. Rich and poor should know one another simply and naturally as friends, and the more visitors can enter into such real friendship the better. When, however, they attempt to deal with cases of relief, I feel that they possess few of the qualifications requisite for doing it wisely; and I would most seriously urge them, either to leave this branch of help entirely to others, or with deliberate purpose to set themselves to learn all that it is essential to them to know before they can do it well. For there is more at stake, a great deal more, than the wasting of their own or their friends' money: that would matter comparatively little if the effect of mistake in its use were not positively disastrous to the poor. But it is disastrous! We go into the house of a young working-man; we meet with ready gift the first need as it arises; we do not pause to remember how the effort to meet that need was a duty for the young husband and father. We discourage the quiet confidence, the careful forethought which would have made a man of him; we diminish his sense of responsibility; the way he spends his earnings begins to appear to him a matter of smaller moment; he dissipates them in the public-house; he gets into the habit of doing so; we, or succeeding visitors, feel the hopelessness of help increase; not only does the drag upon our purse become heavier and heavier, but it becomes clearer to us that the money we give does

not adequately feed the wife and children, while it does lead the husband to hope that if he yields to the strongly increased temptation to drink, some lady will help, some charity interpose, the children won't quite starve. We have weakened the natural ties, broken the appointed order; and the neat, tidy little home has sunk into the drunkard's desolate room.

Or we take up the case of a widow; and instead of once for all considering how much she can do for her own and her children's support, and deliberately uniting our forces to relieve her once for all of that part of the cost which she cannot meet, we let her come up to our house whenever she cannot fulfil her engagements, and we give her, when her story or tears move us, a few shillings. We ease our own feelings by doing this; but what besides have we done? We have not fortified her for the battle of life: we have not cultivated in her the habit of deliberate arrangement as to the best expenditure of her scanty means. We have done something to teach her how easy it is, if she gets into debt and the brokers are put in, to go round to one house after another and get a few shillings from each, and having met the difficulty for the moment, to begin involving herself in another. Look at her a few years later. The sincere grief of the widowed mother has been degraded into a means of begging; the ready tears come (or appear to come) at call; the sacred grief is for every one to see, in hopes some one may alleviate it with half a crown. The sense of a right to be helped has grown, the sense of her own duty has diminished. Work has not paid so well that it has been steadily persevered in. The easily begged money has been easily spent; the powers of endurance, the habits of industry are gone; grief is her stock in trade. Its frequent use has diminished the power of feeling strongly and sincerely. Perhaps she has discovered that professions of piety are rewarded with half-crowns; and expressions, once sincere, have become cant phrases. We are shocked at her. We say we were glad enough to help her when she was working, and was feeling simply and strongly; but now it is different. My friends, who made it different? God gave her the sacred sorrow and the difficulties of her life to soften and to train her. It might have been well that we should, like true friends, have stood by her, and so far diminished her difficulty as to make it just within her power to meet it. It might have been well for us to support one child, to pay school fees, or to help in some other way by some one distinct payment, so regular as to become very natural to her; but in some way we ought to have left her responsibilities to have been met by her own energies. Then we should have been able to take and keep the position of friends. She would not have learned to watch our faces to see what expression on her part extorted pity or shillings best, but would have come to us when the memories of the past were too heavy to bear alone; and the words of hope in God's mercy and wisdom would have been spoken from the heart to the heart.

Let visitors be friends, and nothing else, leaving money help to others; or else study seriously all wise effectual ways of help, that they may not be driven to miserable doles of half-crowns and bread-tickets, which are

surely destructive of vigorous life in the poor, and of natural healthy relation between friends. I could, — you could yourselves, — multiply instances of this a hundredfold. It will be more profitable to study how in the future they may be avoided.

A marked advantage of district committees is that, while doing nothing to weaken local action, they present a larger area to the sympathy of their members. When parishes were first constituted, each parish must in general have had its own rich and poor. But this has ceased to be so in many cases, owing to the large population dwelling in a small area. The tendency of late has been to sub-divide ecclesiastical districts. The rich are not anxious to have the poor living in very close proximity to them; and every class is more and more driven into quarters appropriated exclusively to itself. The consequence of this is — and increasingly — that, if a rich man says, "I will help in my own parish," there are vast numbers of poor living perhaps near to him, probably within what in the country would be considered easy walking distance, and certainly in the same town, whose lives he does not touch. I cannot tell you how terrible to me appear these vast spaces of ground covered with houses inhabited by persons at one dead level of poverty. Sometimes the tracts appropriated to the houses of the wealthy seem to me in another way more terrible. All good gifts, for which we are bound to lift our hearts in praise to God, seem to retain their sanctity only when they are shared. And it seems to me often as if the luxury, the ease, the splendor, — yes, even the fair spaces of lawn and terrace, — were almost ghastly when they are enjoyed by those who never consider the poor, in whom no spirit of self-sacrifice leads to resolute appropriation of some large share of the good things to those who are out of the way. There are few who do not recognize the duty of giving or sharing in some measure; but the subdivision of districts, leaving one poor and another rich, the ever-extending size of London, making the poor farther and farther off from the rich, has a tendency to shut out many poor from this sympathy.

The Charity Organization Society has done something to mitigate this evil, to make you feel that you are parts of a larger whole than your ecclesiastical parish. The poor-law has compulsorily made you feel it. When it became clear that it was intolerably unjust to throw the burden of the largest number of paupers on the poorest rate-payers, poor-law areas were enlarged so as to unite rich and poor neighborhoods; also, certain expenditure was charged to a metropolitan rate. That poor-law arrangement, however, never touched your hearts. It is doubtful whether the dwellers in Fitzroy Park feel more united with those in Somer's Town because they are both in St. Pancras parish, nor much added tenderness for the sick man in Poplar, because if he has small-pox he is carried to a hospital supported by a metropolitan rate. The alteration has done good because it has equalized burdens, and enforced the fulfilment of a duty. But the Charity Organization Society does more — it asks you to accept this duty as a privilege, and voluntarily and gladly to help, remembering the less favored districts which are near you, or which, though farther off, still belong to the same city.

It has taken the poor-law boundary to mark its area. It has asked all charitable people within that area to meet and consult about their charities. It has arranged that the working expenses of office and agent shall be shared by a large district. It has formed a meeting-place, where workers for the poor shall be able to learn each what the other is doing, even at the farther extremes of a long parish like this. You will certainly enlarge your sympathies if thus you meet; for when there come before you the stories of living men and women wanting help in districts where funds are not abundant, when you learn to know the clergy and others laboring in poorer places, you will begin to interpret the word "neighbor" in a large and liberal sense.

Do you realize how limited is our notion of it now, and what it has brought us to? Have you any picture before you of the parts of London where, for acres and acres, the ground is covered with the dwellings of the poor alone? where no landlord can afford many feet of space unbuilt over at the back of his house? where the clergyman toils on, almost singlehanded, for unrefreshed year after unrefreshed year? where curates will hardly go and work? where no gay life enlivens the monotony of toil, which is interrupted only by the wild unholy carousal of a bank holiday? where the clergyman's wife can hardly sleep, because of the wild mirth of the surrounding streets? We talk of the claims of parish and neighborhood; and they should be seriously remembered. But are they not sometimes urged rather from a lazy desire not to take the trouble to go farther, or from the easy agreeable wish to oblige the neighboring minister, who calls to ask a new resident for help in the Sunday school or district? If, indeed, the decision is a deliberate choice of a near duty distinctly seen, rather than of a far-off one less realized, one may respect it. But we must remember there are other claims than those arising out of proximity, and that it may be our duty to realize what is not brought under our eyes. We live upon the labors of the poor in districts far from our homes. Our fathers and brothers may have chambers, factories, offices right down among them. We are content to draw our wealth from these. Does this imply no duty? Is the whole duty fulfilled when the head of a firm draws a check for donations to the local charity? and are the gentle ministrations of the ladies of the family to be confined to the few pampered poor near their house? It is our withdrawal from the less pleasant neighborhood to build for ourselves substantial villas with pleasant gardens, which has left these tracts what they are. Even when there is nothing sensationally terrible in the wickedness or destitution of a place, when it is covered with little houses of laundresses or small shopkeepers, are we who have advantages of education or refinement not needed there? Have we no bright flowers to take to the people, no books to lend, no sweet sympathy and young brightness to carry among them? Ought we not to be accumulating those memories which will give us a place near them as real friends if the time of loss and trial comes?

I would urge you all who are inhabitants of a large parish markedly divided into poor and rich districts, as citizens of a city fearfully so divided, to weigh well your duties; and, never forgetting the near ones

to home and neighborhood, to remember also that when Europe is sacrificed to England, England to your own town, your own town to your parish, your parish to your family, the step is easy to sacrifice your family to yourself. Whereas, if you try to accept the duty as our Lord showed it, and to carry with you joyfully in such acceptance those who are nearest and dearest to you, you will find that a large and true imagination will show you the place which every duty should hold in your lives: you will not find any human being so away but that your sympathy will reach, and your desire to help will tell in due degree if the need of help comes. Your life, be it shadowed ever so much by individual loss or pain, will be full and blessed; for all God's children will be dear to you, and his earth sacred. You will have no real conflict of duties, nor long doubt about their relative importance. No pain shall overwhelm, nor doubt confound you. For the blessing of guidance shall be yours, and you will assuredly learn what those words mean, "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee;" "Though the Lord give thee the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers, and thine ears shall hear a word saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ve turn to the right hand or when ye turn to the left."